

Outing Park  
(Provost Apartment House)  
47 Richelieu Street  
Springfield  
Hampden County  
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-1136-I

HABS  
MASS.  
7-SPRIF,  
6I-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
MID-ATLANTIC REGION NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

OUTING PARK  
(Provost Apartment House)

HABS No. MA-1136-I

Location 47 Richelieu Street, Springfield, Hampden County, Massachusetts (southeast corner of Richelieu and Oswego Streets).  
USGS Springfield South - Mass.-Conn. Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 18.700220.4663100

Present Owner Raymond A. and Eileen M. Callahan  
c/o Callahan Realty  
1 South End Bridge Circle  
Agawam, MA

Present Occupants Residential rental tenants

Present Use Residential

Statement of Significance This four-story apartment block was built four years prior to the beginning development of "Outing Park" by Gagnier and Angers. It was constructed by John W. Provost, son of an early Springfield French Canadian immigrant and area carpenter. For the years between 1909-1913, the Provost Apartment House faced on to Outing Park, the large open eight-acre recreation area that by 1913 was beginning to develop into what would be Springfield's largest apartment house district.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date of erection: 1909, building reports (source).
2. Architect: The architect was the builder (see #4) John B. Provost.
3. Original and subsequent owners: Description of the property; SOUTHERLY in a line in continuation of the Easterly line of Richelieu Court, sixty-five (65) feet; thence EASTERLY in a line parallel with the Southerly line of land formerly of John B. Provost, now or formerly of one Maloney and one Nirenstein about ninety-five

(95) feet to land of the Gordon estate; thence NORTHERLY on last named land about seventy (70) feet to the southeasterly corner of land formerly of John B. Provost, now of Joseph Chamberlain, and thence WESTERLY on last named land and land of one Maloney about one-hundred fifteen (115) feet to place of beginning. References to the Chain of Title to the land upon which the structure stands can be found in the Hampden County Registry of Deeds, 50 State Street, Springfield, MA.

1909 Deed, October 20, 1909 recorded in Book 780 p. 158.  
Edward R. Cooley to John W. Provost and A. Emil Roy.

1911 Deed, March 15, 1911 recorded in Book 800 p. 576.  
John W. Provost and A. Emil Roy to Clarinda and Edmour Dalpe.

1919-1930 The property changed ownership frequently without change to the structure.

Book 1054 p. 176, September 19, 1919.  
Book 1132 p. 454, May 27, 1922.  
Book 1143 p. 52, June 5, 1922.  
Book 1461 p. 529, April 4, 1930.

1969 Deed, December 30, 1969 recorded in Book 3484 p. 572.  
Richard E. Kent to Robert W. Kirchner.

4. Builder: John B. Provost was an early French Canadian immigrant to Springfield. He is listed in the 1865 City Directory as a carpenter working and living in the South End of Springfield, one of three French Canadian sections of the city. Provost built two four-story apartment blocks on Richelieu Street in the early twentieth century. When Pierre Angers immigrated to Springfield from Canada in 1887, he first worked with Provost as a builder and contractor.
5. Original Plans and Construction: The Provost Apartment House was constructed as a four-story brick residential apartment block for \$16,000. An early streetscape view (OUTING PARK HABS No. MA-1136 photo #2) taken in 1924, shows the Provost Apartment House just as it looks today.

(OUTING PARK HABS No. MA-1136 photo #5) The building features two bay windows, each four stories in height. Original plans are not available.

6. Alterations: Minor alterations to the interior rooms occurred in 1975 and 1976 by Raymond A. Callahan, the owner. These changes included installing suspending ceilings and general maintenance.

B. Historical Context

The Provost Apartment House is one of two four-story brick tenement blocks constructed by John B. Provost along Richelieu Street at the start of the twentieth century. Both structures are very similar and existed as the only apartment blocks in the area until 1913. For a short time (four years), the Provost Apartment House faced on to Outing Park, an eight-acre recreation area used for games and circuses. A dramatic rise in topography occurs along the eastern boundary of the Provost site. This bluff has historically separated a wealthy residential area from the working class single-family homes and apartment house district. Provost is the name of the builder and first owner (building records and Massachusetts Historical Commission Form B - Building Survey).

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural Character: The Provost Apartment House is an example of a very early twentieth century apartment block. The crisp, simplistic lines of the building, void of detail is representative of tenement housing construction for the working class.
2. Condition of fabric: Fair.

B. Description of Exterior

1. Over-all dimensions: The general shape of this four-story building is rectangular measuring approximately 56'6" x 48'. The front (west) facade is five bays wide with the sides being four bays wide.
2. Foundation: Two feet thick-brick.

3. Walls: The front (west) facade is composed of glazed red brick with a band of lighter red-yellow brick above the fourth story. The side walls are composed of common red brick. Brownstone was used for all window sills (photos #1 and #2).
  4. Structural systems: Brick bearing walls with wood framing.
  5. Porch: A covered wooden porch in poor condition extends out from and runs along the east facade (photo #2). The central portion of the porch measuring 8' x 12'6" is framed in and covered with wood clapboard siding. An early 1910 Springfield Atlas shows the Provost Apartment House but it does not indicate anything other than an open porch. However, a 1920 Springfield Atlas does show the portion of the porch that is presently framed in. Thus, it is an assumption that this change in the porch occurred between 1910-1920 though there is no written record to verify this change. The porch is supported by brick piers.
  6. Openings:
    - a. Doorways and doors: One centrally located front entrance exists on the west facade. The front door is missing but wood framed sidelights are present.
    - b. Windows: Windows are wood one-over-one (some along the west facade are two-over-two and probably original) double hung and single glazed.
  7. Roof:
    - a. Shape, covering: The roof is flat with asphalt shingling for a covering.
    - b. Cornice: The cornice is tin with dentils.
- C. Description of Interior
1. Floorplan:
    - a. Basement: The basement is full height with a cement floor used for storage and boiler.

- b. First, Second, Third, Fourth Floors: Each floor layout is the same and can be observed from the enclosed typical floorplan. The building has eight apartment units, two per floor. Each apartment has five rooms. The closed-in porch area serves as a small kitchen pantry for each apartment.

2. Stairway: A centrally located stairway with an entrance on the west side serves all four floors. The stairway has simple wood treads covered with linoleum, a wood handrail, newel posts and balusters running the entire length.

3. **Flooring:** All floors are softwood covered with linoleum or carpeting (photo #3).

4. Wall and ceiling finish: Walls and ceilings are plaster and lath. Some walls are covered with contemporary paper. Some ceilings have been lowered and consist of acoustical tile (photo #3).

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: Doorways are trimmed with simple wood molding. Doors are solid wood paneled.

b. Windows: Wood casings and simple wood trim exists on window openings, similar to doorway trim.

6. Decorative features and trim: Some rooms have built-in shelves and cabinets (photo #3). Baseboard trim is wood with a quarter-inch roll design.

7. Mechanical equipment:

a. Heating: The building continues to be heated by steam heat. Cast iron radiators (original) exist in most rooms.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The Provost Apartment House is sited five feet from the Richelieu Street line. The structure faces west on a north-south axis. Fifty feet (50) to the east the topography begins to rise sharply.

This rise is a bluff that runs a north to south course through the area creating a natural eastern boundary for the Hollywood district. Single-family homes are located to the north of the Provost Apartment House while multi-family apartment blocks are located to the west and south.

### PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural Drawings: "Plan of Outing Park" owned by Gagnier and Angers drawn by Steele Bros., C. E. February 1913, File #346 (photo #1 in Outing Park narrative) located in the Hampden County Registry of Deeds, 50 State Street, Springfield, MA. Architectural floor plan drawn 1982 by Carl J. Warfield, AIA, 125 Dwight Street, Springfield, MA 01103.

B. Bibliography

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Deed Books - Hampden County Registry of Deeds, Springfield, MA.

Wills - Probate, Hampden County Court House, Springfield, MA.

Vertical File Collection - Genealogy/Local  
Springfield City Directories 1917-1920 History Department  
Springfield Atlases 1899, 1910, 1920 Springfield City Library, Springfield, MA.

Building Permit - Springfield Building Department, City Hall, Springfield, MA.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Lonegran, Edmond P., South End Survey Project.  
Springfield Preservation Trust, Springfield,  
Massachusetts July 1983.

Massachusetts Historical Commission MHC Reconnaissance Survey Report. Boston, Massachusetts  
March 1982.

Springfield Planning Department Massachusetts  
South End Plan September 1979.

Springfield Planning Department The City Profile.  
Springfield, Massachusetts August 1983.

Springfield Planning Department South End Urban  
Renewal Plan January 1982.

Springfield Preservation Trust Overview.

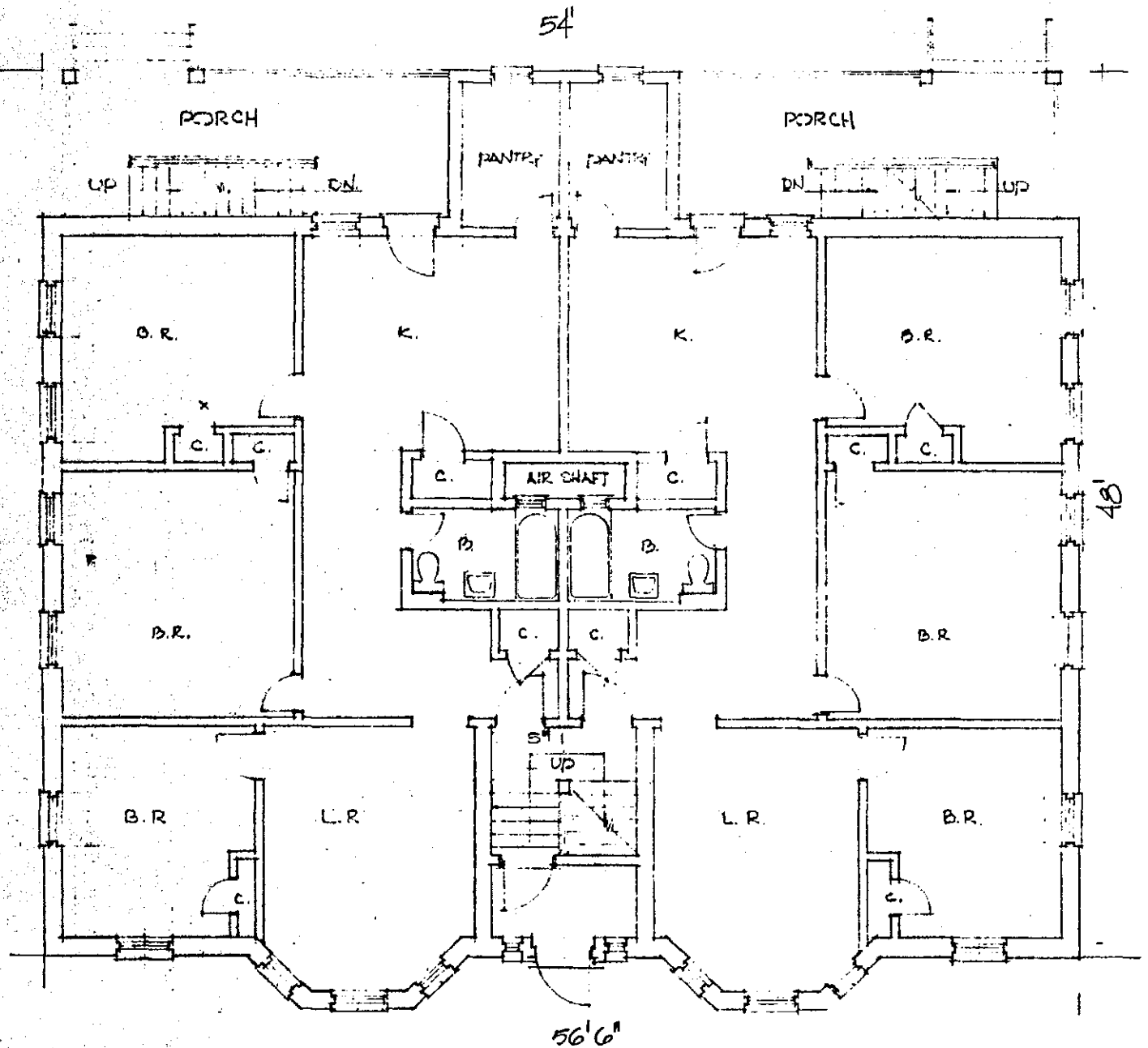
Weber, Margo, Little Hollywood Historical  
District Preliminary Documentation 1983.

Massachusetts Historical Commission Form B -  
Buildings.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

Please refer to narrative OUTING PARK HABS No. MA-1136 in  
section on PROJECT INFORMATION. PART V





47-RICHELIEU STREET  
DRAWN: FEB. 1905

8-3 BEDROOM UNITS  
4 STORY